

promulgated by the committee at the beginning of each session.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. RISCH. Madam President, regrettably I am necessarily absent on passage of H.J. Res. 26 as I am attending the funeral of a former Governor. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted in support of the resolution.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MERKLEY. Madam President, due to the passing of my mother, Betty Lou Collins Merkley, I was not able to travel back to Washington, DC, last week to be present on the Senate floor for several votes. However, I would like it stated for the record how I would have voted had I been present.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 26, confirmation of Jamar K. Walker to be U.S. District Judge for the Eastern District of Virginia. Mr. Walker has a distinguished career in both private practice, as well as in public service as a former Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia where he prosecuted a wide range of cases including bribery, money laundering, wire and, bank fraud, foreign corrupt practices, and securities fraud as part of the Financial Crimes and Public Corruption Unit. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 28, confirmation of Jamal N. Whitehead to be U.S. District Judge for the Western District of Washington. With years of experience in commercial litigation, as a trial attorney with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Civil Division of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Washington, Mr. Whitehead is eminently qualified for a seat on the Federal bench.

As the National Employment Lawyers Association said in their letter supporting his nomination, "Mr. Whitehead is a highly qualified attorney who would bring his background representing all sides of employment law disputes and would provide perspective that is very much needed on the federal bench. His work for employers, workers, and the government offer the kind of experience necessary to serve knowledgeably and fairly as a federal judge."

It is for these reasons that Mr. Whitehead was unanimously rated "well qualified" by the American Bar Association and received bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On February 28, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 30, confirmation of Araceli Martinez-Olguin to be U.S. District Judge for the Northern District of California. Ms. Martinez-Olguin's entire career has been dedicated to protecting civil and human rights. At the American Civil Liberties Union's—ACLU—Women's Rights Project she represented women of underserved com-

munities with employment and education civil rights cases. At the ACLU's Immigrants' Rights Project, she researched and advocated for victims of human trafficking and assisted in drafting the reauthorization of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

Ms. Martinez-Olguin also worked with Legal Aid at Work in their National Origin, Immigration, and Language Rights Program, where she strived to guarantee the civil rights of immigrant workers, particularly under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and also investigated federally funded education institutions for civil rights violations in the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. And since 2018, Ms. Martinez-Olguin has worked as a supervising attorney at the National Immigration Law Center—NILC—focusing on enforcing constitutional and statutory provisions to protect immigrants' civil and workplace rights.

As only the second Latina to serve on this court, "The confirmation of Ms. Martinez-Olguin would be an important step towards ensuring that our federal courts reflect and represent the diversity of our nation," in the words of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 1, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 32, confirmation of Judge Margaret R. Guzman to be U.S. District Judge for the District of Massachusetts. Judge Guzman has amassed an impressive record over the course of her legal career. Over the course of her 13 years as a public defender with Massachusetts' Committee for Public Counsel Services and then 4 more in private practice, she tried more than 175 case to verdict, judgment, or final decision representing clients who could not afford an attorney, helping them navigate the complex criminal legal system.

In 2009, she was appointed to be an associate justice of the District Court on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Trial Court, and since 2017, Judge Guzman has been the first justice and a district court judge on the Ayer District Court in Middlesex County, MA. Over the course of her years on the bench, Judge Guzman has presided over more than 1,000 cases which have gone to verdict or judgment. And as the first Hispanic Judge to serve on the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, a State where nearly 900,000 adults identify as Hispanic or Latino, Judge Guzman will bring critical life experience to this seat. Had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 1, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 35, passage of H.J. Res. 30—providing for congressional disapproval of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Prudence and Loyalty in Selecting Plan Investments and Exercising Shareholder Rights." This is the latest in ongoing efforts to stymie efforts to take on the climate crisis which is the greatest threat that humankind has ever faced.

Passage would nullify a Labor Department rule which says plan fidu-

ciaries may, but not must, consider climate chaos and other environment, social, and governance—ESG—factors when they make investment decisions, with respect to employee benefit plans. Rules like these are important because a growing number of Americans are increasingly concerned about the future of our planet and they don't want to be supporting businesses or industries that might be contributing in any way to climate chaos. Investors are also concerned about the risks of investing in fossil fuel companies at a time when the future of these companies remains uncertain.

But supporters of this resolution don't want them to even want fiduciaries to have the option to weigh these significant considerations when making decisions about investments or shareholder rights. This is an attack on investors' rights in service of propping up the fossil fuel industry. Therefore, had I been in attendance, I would have voted nay.

On March 2, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 37, confirmation of Colleen R. Lawless to be U.S. District Judge for the Central District of Illinois. For 10 years, Judge Lawless represented plaintiffs in State and Federal courts on a wide range of civil litigation issues from employment discrimination to medical malpractice to family law. In one case, Judge Lawless represented a woman suing her insurance company as she sought coverage for a stay in a medical facility that the insurance company denied. And in another, she represented an African-American water maintenance worker who sued the city of Decatur for discrimination after he was terminated for refusing to sign an agreement that gave him a lower pay but allowed him to bypass civil service selection rules.

In 2019, Judge Lawless was appointed to serve as an associate circuit judge on the Illinois 7th Judicial Circuit Court, where she is currently assigned to the domestic relations division. Over the last 4 years, Judge Lawless has presided over 125 domestic relations bench trials alongside numerous proceedings implicating mental health commitments, small claims, evictions, traffic infractions, and emergency protection orders.

She has been unanimously rated as "well qualified" by the American Bar Association, received support from several State circuit court judges and justices, as well as the Sojourn Shelter and Services, a not-for-profit corporation founded to help eliminate domestic violence through service, leadership, and education which serves five central Illinois counties, and received strong bipartisan support when her nomination was voted out of committee. Therefore, had I been in attendance, I would have voted yea.

On March 2, 2023, I missed rollcall vote No. 39, confirmation of Jonathan